

Message Text

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SUBJECT: CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS:A.C.T. SAN FRANCISCO

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PRESS STATEMENT (ONLY IF ASKED) ON
A.C.T.

SUBJECT: POSTPONEMENT OF AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATRE TOUR
OF THE SOVIET UNION.

1. IF ASKED ABOUT THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE TOUR WE MAY
RESPOND THAT THE PROPOSED DEPARTMENT OF STATE SPONSORED
TOUR BY THE AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER (A.C.T.) SAN FRAN-
CISCO OF THE SOVIET UNION HAS BEEN POSTPONED FROM THE FALL
OF 1975 UNTIL THE SPRING OF 1976.

SINCE THE FALL OF 1974 THE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN NEGOTIATING
WITH A.C.T. TO PRESENT TWO AMERICAN PLAYS ON TOUR IN THE
USSR IN SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER OF 1975. THE TWO PLAYS
SELECTED BY A.C.T. FOR THE SOVIET TRIP WERE EUGENE O'NEILL'S
"DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS" AND THORNTON WILDER'S "MATCHMAKER."

THESE PLAYS WILL ALSO BE PRESENTED IN A.C.T.' 1975-76
SEASON IN SAN FRANCISCO.

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THE DEPARTMENT HAD HOPED TO BE ABLE TO MEET THE TARGET
DATE THIS FALL, BUT IT HAS NOT BEEN POSSIBLE TO COMPLETE
NEGOTIATIONS FOR THIS TOUR FOR THIS PROJECTED DATE WITH
A.C.T. AND WITH THE SOVIET MINISTRY OF CULTURE, WHICH

APPROVES ALL FOREIGN CULTURAL PROGRAMS WHICH APPEAR IN THE SOVIET UNION. THE DEPARTMENT IS CONTINUING TO WORK OUT THE NECESSARY DETAILS FOR THE TOUR.

THE CULTURAL EXCHANGES AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION PROVIDES FOR THE EXCHANGE OF 10 MAJOR PERFORMING ARTS GROUPS IN THE PERIOD 1974-76. THE DEPARTMENT, HAVING SPONSORED A SUCCESSFUL TOUR OF THE USSR OF THE ARENA STAGE OF WASHINGTON IN 1973, AGREED WITH THE SOVIET MINISTRY OF CULTURE TO SELECT A SECOND AMERICAN THEATRICAL COMPANY TO TOUR THE USSR IN 1975.

2. IF ASKED FURTHER WHAT SPECIFIC NEGOTIATIONS OR DETAILS COULD NOT BE AGREED UPON, IN VIEW OF VICE MINISTER OF CULTURE POPOV'S STATEMENT IN SAN FRANCISCO DURING HIS RECENT VISIT THERE THAT THE A.C.T. WAS GOING TO THE USSR THIS FALL, WE MAY RESPOND AS FOLLOWS: THE SOVIET MINISTRY OF CULTURE WAS UNWILLING TO AGREE ON THE PROPOSED REPERTORY IN TIME TO PERMIT THE SEPTEMBER TOUR TO TAKE PLACE. WE ARE CONTINUING TO EXPLORE THE QUESTION OF THE REPERTORY WITH A.C.T. AND THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE.

3. IF ASKED WHO THE SOVIETS DID NOT AGREE TO THE REPERTORY, WE MAY RESPOND THAT THE MINISTRY DOES NOT BELIEVE "MATCHMAKER WOULD BE INTERESTING FOR SOVIET AUDIENCES.

4. IF ASKED ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT'S ROLE IN THE SELECTION OF PLAYS WE CAN RESPOND THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAS CONSULTED FREQUENTLY WITH A.C.T. ON QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE REPERTORY.

2. FYI: A.C.T. INFORMS DEPT THAT THEY WILL PLAY POSTPONEMENT IN LOW KEY. CAST HAD BEEN TOLD THERE WAS ONLY "POSSIBILITY" OF A.C.T.'S TOURING USSR IN FALL. KISSINGER

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